

CANADIAN MOVING PICTURE DIGEST

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The British Sense of Humour

SOMEWHERE, sometime, the somewhere in America, and the sometime back in the dark ages, that is the dark ages of Hitlerism and preceding that era of darkness, it was said the British had no sense of humour, that they exploded with laughter at a joke as if the humour of it was timed to go off at the setting of a clock, like a time-bomb. The Nazis have learned that there is no time-clock to the British sense of humour in respect to the threatened invasion, that the British are not only in time for the Nazi Bombers, but for air-raids in Naziland where they will do the most good. That the British sense of humour by way of "letting the Nazis have it" is a grim sense of humour, but in addition to being able to "take it", the British laughingly take it on their funny bone and let the world know that this battle for human rights is not only a question of life and death for millions of people facing the front line of attack in England, but a question of life and death for millions of people all over the world.

The British stand among the debris of blasted traditions in the form of historic buildings, but as they dig out those who have been wounded, those who have been murdered, the wounded Britisher looks about him and manages to whisper to his or her rescuers, "it's a funny war, but meet me in Berlin when we carve up Jerry".

No one is in a crying mood, neither the people, the press, or the magazines, the latter always identified with seeing the funny side of life. The British are so certain that they can beat Hitlerism and invade Naziland that nothing can get us down. Will Fyffe, who has endeared himself to Canadian audiences through the several excellent British pictures in which he has recently appeared, is telling audiences in England that when he leaned over a freighter and shouted, "waiter", three Italian submarines "broke the surface". The audience shrieks with laughter. He sends his audiences into another wave of laughter when he tells them that every navy of the world has its favorite drink, the American Navy likes whiskey, the British Navy likes gin, and the Italian Navy sticks to port.

Several cartoons republished in a recent issue of "Life", show a hut in which soldiers are sleeping, an officer appears at the door and calls, "Awake for morning in the bowl of night has flung the stone that puts the stars to flight", even Omar Khayyam has his military uses. Another cartoon reveals a General stroking his waxed moustache and ogling a young woman dressed in a Service uniform, whereupon the young woman lets the General know in no uncertain terms, war or no war, "Bird in a gilded cage I may be, General, but always a lady bird". It may be added that the young woman is operating an elevator in a public building.

These are but a few of the many cartoons which reveal the British, not only laughing at Jerry, but laughing at themselves. A good story going the rounds is the following; a young Nazi pilot about to join the German Air Force was told, "You'll get ten marks a day, and if you fly over England you'll get twelve". The young conscript replies to his commanding officer, "Fine, how much does that make for a week?" whereupon the commanding officer replies, "Well, we haven't paid anyone for a week yet".

There is the story of a pretty blonde who shouted in the darkness of a crowded air-raid shelter, "Take your dirty hands off my knee. No, not you, YOU".

There is a cartoon of a man standing before the different parts of his car and complaining, "I don't mind putting my car out of action every night, but making it go again every morning is going to drive me mad".

At the Uptown, Toronto, patrons doubled up with laughter at George Formby's "In The Air", and when thousands and thousands hold their sides to prevent rib-breakage night after night, you can understand that the Canadians have grown up with a British sense of humour, also. If there is one thing that makes Hitler, Goering, Goebbels and that bunch of gangsters mad, it's when we laugh in their face, even when we die laughing.

—Editor.



THE WISE MONEY IS ON LEO AGAIN!

As showmen sign contracts for the New Season they recall with happy recollection the past summer of M-G-M hits. (For instance "Andy Hardy Meets Deb", "Mortal Storm", "New Moon", "I Love You Again" and the sensational "Boom Town" among others). The New Season is already ablaze with M-G-M hits—"STRIKE UP THE BAND", "WYOMING", "THIRD FINGER, LEFT HAND" and "ESCAPE" are just a few of the early triumphs. M-G-M has more pictures completed and previewed than ever before at this season of the year. **The wise boys are again enjoying that Friendly Company feeling!**

RAY PRESENTS



JOHN BALABAN, brother of Barney Balaban, the latter President of Paramount Pictures and the former in charge of the Balaban and Katz Interests, made a statement at Chicago bearing on the question of the double feature. Mr. Balaban said, "Today, in spite of the polls which seem to indicate a majority of people are against double features, our theatres are operating at a profit. Therefore from a sound economic point of view it would be foolish for us to abolish a program that is bringing in a profit."

But the question of profit is not the only matter we have to consider with double features. There is the question of product. Until such time as conditions in the Industry, and by that I mean of course, the producers start making fewer and better pictures, preclude the showing of doubles, then of course we may take steps to eliminate this type of program."

THERE is a decided movement by producers at least to eliminate the double feature by producing features of greater length. But the producers have also the idea running parallel with the longer feature, of increased prices of admission and long runs. How this policy is to take care of thousands and thousands of theatres always waiting for product, the smaller theatres, or theatres not tied in with circuits, etc., and not in a position to present extended runs, because when they get any picture of importance it has already been "milked" by its first run, plus second and third runs, etc., etc., is beyond my showmanship ability to figure out.

These thousands of theatres cannot increase their admission prices. Why should the public pay as much admission to see a picture at their neighborhood theatres, when they can attend one of the circuit theatres and see the picture for the same price six months earlier.

This brings us to the question of whether the policies governing our Industry should concern themselves with the operation of the thousands and thousands of Independent theatres, or are to be shaped to take care of the big circuit and affiliated theatres only, leaving the other theatres to adjust themselves to the big run policies!

Increased runs and increased prices will not solve the problem of film, or revenue for the Independent theatres. It will bring more revenue unquestionably into the exchequer of the producer-owned theatre companies, but there is this other angle to consider, longer runs may release more pictures for the Independent. If a first run theatre introduces long runs on pictures the distribution will become clogged with pictures, that is if the producers keep up their production programs, but if they decide, as some of our leading producers of today are deciding, to make only two pictures a year, we are back again in the same jam, a shortage of good pictures for Independents and by Independents I am here referring to theatres which have no producer-distributor affiliations.

WILKERSON, of the Hollywood Reporter, contends with good sense that the double feature does not solve the Exhibition problem and asks, "Anyhow, if double features are the success the proponents of that menace insist, why, then, do they give away dishes, glassware, automobiles and the hundred-and-one other types of giveaways? Why must they combine the dual shows

with Bank Nights, Screeno, Keeno and all the other crappo ideas to bring people in to see the dual shows?"

Wilkerson contends that the giveaways are costing our Industry upwards of \$20,000,000 a year. Someone should figure out what giveaways are costing every industry. Motion Pictures cater to the masses, which have had every possible inducement by way of a giveaway offered to them for the purchase of anything from an automobile to raising a large family, the latter which is stimulated in many countries by pensions and a bonus to the father or the mother.

Editorially, we have been opposed to double features and to giveaways, for many years, but after being an exhibitor for a year, I am disposed to disagree with the editorial viewpoint of *The Digest* in respect to double features and to giveaways, because the Motion Picture Industry is living and has been living in an abnormal world, a world in which economic depressions and rumours of war have for a quarter of a century, not overlooking monopolistic tendencies, dominated the business policies of doing business. The struggle for existence is a very real one. I find that the exhibitor outside of a producer-exhibitor affiliation can only hope to secure in his double feature bill, one picture of the two which has not been played to death in every key point by circuit-controlled theatres and their affiliates. The reason for this, that the circuit-controlled theatres do not take the lower brackets save for their smaller theatres. This gives the Independent exhibitor an opportunity of offering his patrons at least one picture good, bad, or indifferent, which they have not seen, added to which is the additional bribe of the giveaway.

UNTIL there is a more general distribution of good product, with earlier releases to the Independent theatres, the latter which make up the majority of theatres operating, I am afraid we will have double features and giveaways.

Have you, who are interested in improving business operations in our Industry looked into the situation of controlled runs? Have you taken into consideration that circuit-controlled theatres and affiliates not only secure for themselves first run, second run, but endeavor to hold the third run, also?

Then there are the Co-operatives developing into a buying power which leaves the Independent out on a limb as far as competing for product. For these Co-operatives are not only made up of a group of theatres, where the individual theatreowner operates his own theatre, but are generally in control of exhibitors who own a number of theatres; and there are some distributor and producer interests very closely associated with the theatre operations of the controlling interests of Co-operative groups all over the American Continent.



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Attorney-General McQuarrie Lauds Motion Picture Industry Efforts At N.S. Allied Exhibitors Meeting

RE-ELECT CUZNER, COURTNEY AND SOBEY

Halifax, N.S.—The Annual Meeting of the Allied Exhibitors of Nova Scotia was held at the Nova Scotian Hotel here on Wednesday. About forty theatres were represented at the meeting.

The morning session was opened by President W. H. Cuzner, following which the Secretary, Mr. T. J. Courtney, of the Casino Theatre, Halifax, read the minutes of the last meeting and presented the financial report of the Association.

The President gave an outline of the past year's activities, covering several committee meetings in connection with the work required of him as President.

A. J. Mason Reports

Mr. A. J. Mason, Chairman of the Allied Permanent Working Committee, which is made up of 5 exhibitors whose duty it is to at all times act for the exhibitors in making contacts with the Government gave his report. He stated that representation had been made to the Government in connection with Bill 92, revision of the present Theatre and Cinematograph Act, the possible control and investigation re customs laws governing importation of slot movie machines and their operation within the Province. Further regulation in this matter was promised by the Government. The members present reaffirmed last year's resolution that the committee continue to urge the repeal of Bill 92 from the statute book of the Province.

Conciliation Aids

A report of the year's work of the Conciliation Board was given by Chairman A. J. Mason. Since its formation on May 3rd of 1939, to date there have been two cases between two Independents, two cases between an Independent and the Spencer Circuit, and two cases between one Independent and the Famous Players Circuit. With the exception of the case of Mr. Lynn of the Strand Theatre, Sydney, each case was settled to the satisfaction of all parties concerned. The Board ironed out problems and difficulties which could not have been satisfactorily rearranged by any other means than by a Conciliation Board, it was reported.

Farr New Member

The members unanimously voted their approval of the reports and the results achieved by the Conciliation Board and for its continuance as a satisfactory means through which future problems may be handled. The Independent representatives of the Conciliation Board remain the same, with the exception that Mr. Johnny Farr of North Sydney, replaces Mr. E. R. Lynn as a member of the Board.

Officers Re-elected

The same officers were elected for the ensuing year. President, W. H. Cuzner (Sydney Mines); Vice-President, Frank Sobey (Stellarton); and Secretary-Treasurer, T. J. Courtney (Halifax).

The Executive Board was elected as follows: A. J. Mason, Capitol Theatre, Springhill; E. R. Lynn, Strand Theatre, Sydney; P. J. Dwyer, Halifax; A. A. Fielding, Strand Theatre, Saint John; N. W. Mason, Roseland, New Glasgow; Fred Gregor, New Waterford.

At the afternoon session, Branch Managers of the Film Exchanges were invited guests, also Mr. Fred Winters of the Capitol and Empress Theatres, Moncton, N.B., and Miss Alice Fairweather of Saint John, Digest Correspondent.

Stress War Work

Mr. Cuzner, in his Presidential address, stressed the importance of exhibitor co-operation with the Motion Picture War Services Committee, and stated that every effort should be made on the part of the members to in every way aid Canada's war work.

Mr. A. J. Macadam, who has retired from active association with the operation of the Casino Theatre, Halifax, was made an Honorary Life Member of the Executive of the organization.

Miss Alice Fairweather, Digest correspondent, was welcomed to the meeting, and responded with a word of thanks. Mr. A. A. Fielding brought up some problems in connection with advertising, and several other exhibitors discussed the recent war savings drive and suggested some new ideas whereby a future drive might be even more successful.

Pioneer Membership Appeal

R. S. Roddick, a Canadian Picture Pioneer, gave a report of the splendid work accomplished through the "Win The War" Savings Stamp Campaign, and especially praised the efforts of the Strand Theatre, Saint John, which theatre grossed the largest sale in the Dominion. Special mention was also made of the wonderful work which John Farr, of North Sydney, accomplished. Mr. A. J. Mason, District Manager in the Maritimes for Canadian Picture Pioneers, and a Life

Member, spoke of the excellent work of the organization, its sponsorship of the War Savings Stamp Drive and the sponsorship of the Motion Picture War Services Committee, and urged all those exhibitors who were eligible for membership to send in their applications.

Attorney General Speaks

A banquet was held in the evening, attended by exhibitors and exchange representatives, C. H. Bennett, Chairman of the Nova Scotia Board of Censors, Attorney-General, the Hon. J. H. McQuarrie, and His Worship Mayor W. E. Donovan of Halifax.

President Cuzner presided at the banquet and introduced the speakers. His Hon. J. H. MacQuarrie, in a witty and most interesting speech, traced the early history of the theatre, and pointed out that neither censorship nor regulations were new ideas, and payed tribute to the influence of the theatres and the improvement in pictures of recent years. He forecast a greater Canada following the present world conflict, and urged the Exhibitors "to work to be worthy of this expansion so as to hand on to our children a greater heritage than was ours". He further complimented them on the splendid work they accomplished in aid of the war saving certificates sale and the war loan drives and told them they had a right to be proud of their place in the Motion Picture Industry.

Cuzner Toasts

President Cuzner gave a toast to the ladies present, Mrs. N. W. Mason, who accompanied her husband, Miss Viola McLeod, sister of S. McLeod of Whitney Pier, and Alice Fairweather of The Digest. Miss Fairweather responded to the toast on behalf of the ladies.

"A Good Time Had By All"

Reg. March, 20th Century-Fox Branch Manager at Saint John, was introduced as "the finest song leader in the Maritimes", and led a sing song accompanied by Major A. R. Cooper, formerly manager of the Prince Edward Theatre at Charlottetown, P.E.I. and now with the forces. Readings were given by Bert Newell, a member of the original Dumbells. R. S. Roddick gave three prizes for the best theatrical stories, which were won by W. H. Cuzner, John Farr and P. J. Hanifen.

It was a most successful meeting and a great spirit of sincere co-operation was manifested.

**CHARLES CAROLE
LAUGHTON ★ LOMBARD**

in
"They Knew What They Wanted"

Directed by Garson Kanin

With WILLIAM GARGAN • HARRY CAREY • FRANK FAY



**Daring!
Exciting!
Sensational!**

Super box-office all the way, in one of the finest dramas ever to come out of Hollywood! . . . Inspired performances, great story, superb direction, magnificent production—IT'S THIS YEAR'S OUTSTANDING PICTURE!



Harry E. Edington, Executive Producer

Produced by Erich Pommer

Screen Play by Robert Ardrey

From the Pulitzer Prize Play by Sidney Howard

ANNA NEAGLE SHOOTING LAST SCENES FOR "NO, NO, NANETTE"



Anna Neagle, in Herbert Wilcox's production of that record-holding musical comedy success, "No, No, Nanette," is now being scored and readied for editing . . . to take its place beside those other big ones from RKO RADIO, like — George Abbott's sensational Broadway musical hit, "Too Many Girls" — Kay Kyser and his band in "You'll Find Out" — Ginger Rogers in "Kitty Foyle" — Orson Welles in "Citizen Kane."

Esquire Films Release 3 Hold Hits In First 3 Months

"CONVOY", "PASTOR HALL" AND "IT'S IN THE AIR"

The phenomenal success of Esquire Films, with its line-up of pictures, five released to date, with three of these smash hold-over hits of a note. Coming at a time when the Canadian public is "in the patronize British films these pictures have not only had the usual draw, but because of their timeliness, as in the case of "Convoy", with a present day problem, and "Pastor Hall" with its expose of Nazi barbarity, have both played to great business.

The company's big star, George Forby, in his first picture to be released by Esquire "It's in the Air", has won friends everywhere, and before long will be established in popularity here in Canada, as he now is in England, the Mother Country's top comedy star.

To date the company has released the following pictures through Empire-Universal: "A Young Man's Fancy", premiere Eglinton, Toronto, on July 29th; "The Outsider", opening at the Eglinton, Toronto, August 26th; "Convoy", at the Imperial, Toronto, August 20th, held over for two weeks; "Pastor Hall", September 19, at the Uptown, Toronto, held over for two weeks, and "It's in the Air" following this film, and playing for two weeks to smash business.

"It's in the Air" played four weeks at the Plaza, Vancouver, and is now in its second week at the Orpheus, Halifax, where it has broken all records and looks like a hold over for a third week. For its fourth Canadian booking, it has opened at the Regent, Ottawa, to great business.

"Pastor Hall" booked at the Granada, St. Thomas, for 3 days was held for 6, and broke the house record. At the Lincoln, St. Catharines, the film was booked for 3 days and was held for 6, and established a new house record. At the Patricia, London, the film was booked for 3 days and was held for 9.

The company's next release, "Let George Do It", is now being dated across Canada.

YEAR BOOK READY

Ottawa, Ont. — The Dominion Bureau of Statistics has announced that the Canada Year Book is now ready for distribution, at the price of \$1.50 per copy, as long as copies are available. Copies may be secured by writing to The King's Printer, Ottawa.

The volume contains a summary of the Dominion's resources and industries and covers all Canada's vital statistics.

B. E. NORRISH PRES BEATTY CHAIRMAN OF

Montreal, Que. — B. E. Norris, Managing Director of Screen News since 1926, elected President and Managing Director, according to the news announced by the Board. Norris is one of the pioneers in the industry in Canada, having founded the Canadian Branch of American company in 1920, its first Manager and in 1921 organized the Canadian company, is, and became Managing Director.

The company also announced Sir Edward Beatty, G.B. Chairman and President of the Pacific Railway Company, has been Chairman of the Board of Associated Screen News.

O'LEARY TO NIAGARA

Niagara Falls, Ont. — O'Leary, formerly manager of Shea's Theatre, Toronto, made manager of the Capitol Theatre, Niagara Falls, succeeding Ward, who has been appointed manager of the Seneca Theatre.

NEW PARRY SOUND HOLDING CORPORATION

Parry Sound, Ont. — Work commenced on the construction of a new 800-seat theatre here by the Parry Sound Holding Corporation. The new building will cost approximately \$100,000. The only other theatre in the town is The Royal, also operated by the Parry Sound Holding Corporation.

PASSES FOR EVACUEES

Edmonton, Alta. — Evacuee children who will live in Edmonton during the duration of the war have been presented with theatre passes by William Wilson, manager of the Grand Theatre.

"These passes may be of some time," said Mr. Wilson. "I have given out 16 so far, and the children seem to appreciate them."

SYDNEY MINES THEATRE

Sydney Mines, N.S. — Rumours of several stories rumouring that there may be a new theatre built at Sydney Mines. At present there is no theatre here.

Special Red Cross Committee Collects O and Distributors In To

WYNA NEAGLE SHOOTING SCENES FOR "NO, NO, THE WESTERNER"



Record Breaker--"The Westerner" from Reuters' Biographical Film

THE WESTERNER"
UNITED ARTISTS

COOPER is listed as the star of Samuel Goldwyn's "The Westerner" but after seeing the picture, I feel that Cooper's role in support of that portrayed by Brennan. Not that this is of Cooper, for it isn't, but it happens that "The Westerner" is the story of 'Judge Roy Bean', and Roy Bean' is Walter Brennan, and Cooper.

Cooper plays the role of a wanderer, who drifts into Vinegar, the home of the genial Judge, dispenser of the law West of Pecos. The Judge, who tends bar in his saloon, concocts a plot of horse-stealing, and sends him to be hanged. Cooper, knowing that the Judge is angry, for his worshipping of actress Doris, saves himself by professing friendship with the Jersey Lily. He tells the Judge all sorts of tales about the latter soon becomes his friend. A war is raging in Vinegar between the cattlemen and the settlers, the latter who have on land that was formerly used by cattlemen for grazing. Cooper helps the Judge to make peace between the two elements, while himself is in love with Doris Davenport, daughter of a settler. The Judge, however, doesn't keep the peace, and sends the cattlemen to burn down the crops and destroy the crops of the settlers, and in the ensuing fight several settlers are killed. Cooper secures the sheriff's badge, and announces that he is going to arrest the man for murder. He catches up with the Judge in a neighboring town where the latter has gone to see Lily perform. He shoots the Judge but then takes him backstage where the actress, just before he dies. Cooper does an excellent job of the role, a role he has played often before to know it by heart. However, overshadowed by Walter Brennan as the Judge, who turns in a striking performance. In the cast include Fred Stone, Forrest, Chill Wills, Lilian Bond, Langtry, and Lucien Littlefield. Davenport impresses in her debut.

Running time—99 minutes.

QUEBEC ALLIED MEETS

Quebec, Que. — Quebec Allied Screen Inc., at their annual meeting, re-elected as President, the Hon. J. H. B. of Associated Screen Artists.

"A DISPATCH FROM REUTERS"

WARNER BROTHERS

THE Brothers Warner have turned again to the historical biography field at which they have proven so successful in the past. This time the subject of their research is Julius Reuter, originator of the wire news service, which today plays such an important part in keeping our newspapers and radio news programs up to the very minute.

Edward G. Robinson, who received such acclaim for his title role in "Dr. Ehrlich's Magic Bullet", again has the title role as Julius Reuter. As his rather dopey, and totally undependable assistant, is seen Eddie Albert. As his wife, is Edna Best, with Otto Kruger as her father. Albert Basserman, who seems to be stealing every picture he appears in, almost succeeds in doing it again as Robinson's friend and adviser who brings about the meeting and fosters the romance between Robinson and Miss Best. Gene Lockhart has a good characterization as a rascally banker, Nigel Bruce is Robinson's English financier friend, who saves him several times from bankruptcy, and Montague Love is publisher of the London Times. Others in the cast include Walter Kingsford, Lumsden Hare, James Stephenson, David Bruce, and Dickie Moore.

Picture traces Julius Reuter's career from the time he operated the pigeon post between Aachen and Brussels, up to the beginning and early struggles of Reuter's Wire News Service. In between is the typical story of struggle against scoffers, lack of funds, and occasional defeat. The romance between the lady-shy Reuter, and the rather progressive daughter of a doctor, is deftly handled in plausible fashion. The final sequence in which Reuter secures the news of President Lincoln's assassination before any other news service in England, and publishes it, only to have the story branded false, and himself a black-guard for publishing it, is a thrilling story. His final clearing before the House of Commons is exceptionally well done.

Picture has been produced with painstaking care towards exactitude. Unfortunately the story fails to deliver the excitement and action suggested by the title. Either Reuter's life was just not very colorful, or the biographers have left out the most exciting episodes. However, it is good entertainment throughout, and in key first runs, and class subsequents, should enjoy considerable success.

Directed by William Dieterle.

Running time—89 minutes.

WHAT A BABY!



**Only Three
Months Old
...and he's
leading the
parade!...**



"CONVOY"

**Hold Over Business
In All Houses
EVERYWHERE!**



"PASTOR HALL"

LONDON	-	-	HELD OVER
★ ST. CATHARINES	-	-	HELD OVER
★ ST. THOMAS	-	-	HELD OVER

Booked In All "A" Houses
Across Canada

★ NEW HOUSE RECORD



"IT'S IN THE AIR"

PLAZA — VICTORIA
4 WEEKS

UPTOWN — TORONTO
HELD OVER—2ND WEEK

ORPHEUS — HALIFAX
HELD OVER—2ND WEEK

Dated In "A" Houses Everywhere



**Get Wealthy With
A Healthy Baby!**

ESQUIRE FILMS

Exclusive Canadian Distributors
Released in Canada Through
EMPIRE-UNIVERSAL EXCHANGES